A NEW

TEST

OF THE

CHURCH

OF

ENGLANDS

LOYALTY.

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A New Test of the Church of Englands Loyalty.

I Have often consider'd, but could never yet find a convincing reason, why that part of the Nation, (which is commonly call'd the *Church* of *England*) should dare appropriate to Themselves alone the Principles of true Loyalty, and that no other *Church* or *Communion* on Earth can be consistent with *Monarchy*, or indeed with any Government.

This is a Presumption of so high a nature, that renders the *Church* of *England* a despicable Enemy to the rest of Man-kind: For what can be more ridiculous than to say, that a Congregation of People calling themselves a *Church*, which cannot pretend to an *Infallibility*, even in matters of Faith, having since their first Institution, made several Fundamental changes of Religious Worship, should however assume to themselves an *Inerrability* in point of Civil Obedience to the Temporal Magistrate? Or what can be more injurious, than to aver, that no other *Sect* or *Community* on Earth from the rising to the setting Sun, can be capable of this singular Gift of *Loyalty*? So that the *Church* of *England* alone (if you have Faith enough to believe her own Testimony,) is that Beautiful Spouse of Christ, Holy in her *Doctrine*, and *Infallible* in her Duty to the Supream Magistrate, whom (by a Revelation peculiar to her self,) she owns both for her Temporal and Spiritual Head. But I doubt much whether her *ipsa dixit* alone will pass currant with all the Nations of the Universe, without making further search into the Verity of this bold Assertion.

We will allow them, however (and that's the only thing in my opinion, they can value themselves upon,) that most of the Members of this *Communion* have been Faithful and Serviceable to K. *Ch.* I. during the unhappy Commotions in his Reign: But they must allow Us on the other hand, that it was the Ambition of that *Church* to force an Universal Uniformity to her *Liturgy* and *Discipline*, occasion'd that War; and the good King lost both his Life and Crown in the Attempt. And I pray what work of Super-errogation is it in them, not to

have joyn'd with the *Common Enemy* to cut their own Throats? Or to have done that which the Law of Nature dictates to every individual in his own defence? The case of the *Romanists* in those days was quite different from theirs, for they freely expos'd their Lives and Fortunes in the Kings Service, without any regard or prospect of self-Interest: For whether His Majesty lost or won, they expected no Benefit by the change. They were to hope for no Quarter from the Rebels (for it was never known that any of their Communion serv'd that Party:) And on the other side the King Himself seem'd to disown them in all Treaties with the *Parliament*, and Banish'd them at last both from His *Court* and *Army*, to comply with the importunities of His own *Protestant Party*, who would needs have it so. It is much doubted whether those of the *Church* of *England*, had they met with Recompenses of this kind, would have been half so forward to serve a Prince, who instead of cherishing and rewarding, should reject and Banish them; tho' they take never so much pains now to perswade the World, that *Loyalty* is of the Essence of their Religion. Let us but examine the carriage and behaviour of this *Church*, both in her Infancy, and now in her Old Age, and we shall easily perceive the vast difference between the *Loyalty* of her Members to *Catholick Princes*, and the Fidelity of *Catholicks* to *Protestant Kings*.

She began her Infancy under *Edward* VI. an Infant King, when that Famous *Confession* of *Faith* was compil'd of 39 *Articles*. No sooner was *Edward* call'd away, but she endeavour'd with all her Might and Power to set up a Brat of her own to possess the Crown, and to Exclude Queen *Mary* the only Legitimate Child of *Henry* VIII. because she was a *Catholick*. After Queen *Mary*'s Death, *Elizabeth*, a known B——d, rais'd this *Prelatick Protestancy* call'd the *Ch.* of *Eng.* as a Prop to support the weakness of her Title: And they, no sooner found themselves re-establish'd, than They Enacted these blood *Canibal* Laws (a sufficient Testimony of their Moderation and Tenderness) to Hang, Draw and Quarter the Priests of the Living God, from whom they themselves pretend to derive their im-

immediate Succeſſion: Laws that have been, and are to this day, abhorr'd and exclaim'd againſt by all the *Reform'd Churches* of *Chriſtendom. Impriſonment*, *Baniſhment*, and *Confiſcation of Goods*, were the moderate *Ch.* of *Englands* Laws in favour of the *Layity*, but ſeverely Executed in thoſe days. And to Crown the extraordinary *Loyalty* of the Members of this *Church*, they barbarouſly Murder'd the undoubted Queen of *Scotland*, the Queen *Dowager* of *France*, and the Lawful Heir of the Crown of *England*, inhumanely denying her a *Prieſt* of her own Communion to aſſiſt her in the Agony of Death.

The greateſt Zealots of the *Church* of *England* will not, I hope, have the confidence to alledge that this execrable Fact, and the firſt of the kind, was contriv'd, and executed by *Presbyterians*, *Independants* or *Anabaptiſts*: Our *Records* and *Hiſtories* clearly make out, that the Members of That *Church* were the only Men who then voted in *Parliament*, who ſate in *Council*, who were the *Commiſſioners* delegated, to Try, and Condemn *Mary* Queen of *Scots*, and the Lawful Queen of *Eng.* whom they beheaded on a publick Scaffold, to the Scandal and Reproach of *Chriſtianity*: And this done without the leaſt Remorſe or Repentance, no *Prelate*, *Peer*, *Judge*, or *Senator* of that *Communion* having ever yet declar'd his reſentment againſt this barbarous Act. *Behold here an incomparable ſort of* Loyalty, *to ſet up the Title of a Baſtard, and to Murder the Legitimate Heir. And ſome have affirm'd in Print, that K.* Charles I. *came to the ſame Tragical end, for being too Zealouſly Devoted to a* Church, *which prov'd ſo Cruel and Treacherous to His Grand-mother; and gave the firſt preſident of cutting off a Crown'd Head by the hands of a Hang-man.*

If therefore aſſiſting a *Uſurper* to invade the Crown, if *Condemning and Executing the Lawful Prince, if Perſecuting their fellow Subjects with Death, and Confiſcation of Goods; and if ſtanding out in oppoſition to their Sovereign, when he is of another Religion*; If theſe I ſay, be ſufficient teſtimones of *Loyalty*, we muſt own the *Church* of *England* to have been hitherto unparallel'd in her Duty. But if this be not the true *Teſt* of Loyal Subjects, I doubt our Rock of *Loyalty*, will ſoon degenerate into a Rock

of

of Scandal, of Diſobedience and Rebellion: whereof we need no further Evidence than her preſent behaviour now in her Old Age, towards our Gracious Sovereign King JAMES II.

His Sacred Majeſty no ſooner took Poſſeſſion of the Throne, then He was Graciouſly pleaſed to make a moſt favourable *Declaration* in behalf of the Members of the *Church of England*, promiſing to maintain that Church as it was by Law Eſtabliſhed: And this early Promiſe from a Prince, who was known to be always true to His Word, ſeem'd to elevate their drooping Spirits, and diſſipate thoſe diſmal Clouds of fearful Apprehenſions, which their ill jealouſie was apt enough to conceive of a Prince of the *Roman Communion*. So that it might be rationally expected from a People ſo Prudent and Loyal as theſe of the *Church of England* would paſs for in the World, to do ſomething on their part, that might expreſs a grateful acknowledgement: which could be no leſs than the *Repeal* of the *Sanguinary Penal Laws*, and the late Impious *TESTS*: The firſt being purpoſely Enacted to maintain the *Uſurpation* of Queen *Eliz.* and the laſt being contriv'd deſignedly to Exclude the preſent *King*. But my *Loyal Gentlemen* have been hitherto ſo far out of the right Byaſs, that in lieu of taking off the *Teſts* and *Penal Laws*, (which all People expected from them in point of Gratitude and good Manners) they made a ſolemn *Addreſs* to His *Majeſty*, that none ſhould be imploy'd who were not capacitated by the ſaid *Laws* and *Teſts* to bear Offices Civil and Military. That is to ſay in ſhort, *Your Majeſty muſt have none either in your Army, or at Court about Your Perſon, but ſuch as really believe, and will ſwear to it that You are an Idolater*. For that's the plain *Engliſh* of the *Teſt*. Now let me ask any indifferent Man, what ſecurity can a Prince have, who muſt keep none about Him, but ſuch *Chriſtians*, that are fully convinc'd in their own Judgement, that he is a *Pagan*? If the ſame People made it Penal heretofore in the Reign of King *Charles* II. to call the King a *Papiſt* or *Heretick*, upon a ſuppoſition that That *True Proteſtant Subject* could not be Faithful to the King, if He were ſuſpected to be any way inclin'd to *Popery*

or

or *Hereſy*; what ſecurity can they now give, that the ſame *Proteſtants* will be true to a Prince who is a declar'd *Papiſt*, and an *Heathen* to boot, by a new *Article of Faith*, which is of greater force and value than the 39 that went before.

But (ſays the *Zealous Proteſtant* of the *Mother-Church*) *If You Repeal the* Teſt, *You take away the Bull-wark that defends the* Ch. *for if that were once demoliſh'd, the Enemy would ruſh in, and poſſeſs all*: *And it is a delicate Innocent* Church, *that cannot be ſafe but in a fortify'd place.* I muſt confeſs it is a great Argument of her Modeſty, to own her ſelf weak and unable to ſubſiſt without the ſupport of *Parliamentary Laws*, to *Hang*, *Draw* and *Quarter* her *Oppoſers*, and without a co-ercive Power too in her ſelf to *Fine*, and *Excommunicate* all *Recuſants*, and *Non-conformiſts*. *Prayer*, *Faſting*, *Mortification of the Fleſh*, and other Auſterities, are not, it ſeems, ſo proper means to remove the Fears and Jealouſies of her tender Conſcience; ſhe muſt make uſe of more powerful Engines for her own ſecurity. The *Primitive Chriſtians* flouriſh'd under Perſecution for the ſpace of 300 years; and the *Catholicks* of theſe Kingdoms, have been almoſt continually ſuffering theſe 150 years paſt: If this new *Proteſtant* Church be from God, why ſhould they deſpair of the ſame Providence, without being guarded by ſo many Acts of *Parliament*? Where is the aſſurance that the *Apoſtolical Church* (as they call themſelves) ſhould have in the aſſiſtance of the *Holy Ghoſt*, *who is to continue with the true* Church *till the conſummation of the World?* And what is now become of this celebrated *Loyalty* to the Temporal Prince, which no People could have in ſo eminent a degree as thoſe of the Church of *England*? It is very remarkable that the *Roman Catholicks* conſtantly adhear'd to King *Charles* I. when he diſown'd and rejected them; and that the Church of *England-Proteſtants* do not now truſt King *James* II. when He gives them ſo many freſh aſſurances of his Royal Protections: Whereby the vaſt difference between the *Loyalty* of the one, and that of the other is clearly diſcern'd.

As for the *Teſts* themſelves, it is not my province to ſhew the

the Abſurdities of them in point of *Doctrine*. For my buſineſs is to ſet forth in its own Colours the extraordinary Loyalty of theſe Men, who obſtinately maintain a *Teſt*, contriv'd by the *Faction*, to uſher in the **Bill of Exclusion**: Though by the by, I muſt hold it a great folly, to ſay that *Tranſubſtantiation* is not a probable Opinion, at leaſt, conſidering the Number and Learning of thoſe who maintain it, which is the beſt part of *Chriſtendom*: And if it be a probable Opinion, it muſt be a great temerety in any Man to ſwear there is no ſuch thing. And ſeeing the *Real Preſence of* Chriſt's *Body* in the *Euchariſt*, is confeſs'd by the moſt Eminent Divines of the *Reformation*, and by the greateſt Prelates and moſt Famous Doctors of the Church of *England*, I ſhould think that this new *Tenet*, which makes it *Idolatry* to adore the *Divine Body of Chriſt*, (whether there be a *Tranſubſtantation*, or not,) muſt certainly ſavour more of a *Mahometan*, than of *Chriſtian* Doctrine. And it is much admir'd (even by ſome of her own Children,) that the Grave and Matron-like Church of *England*, which values her ſelf ſo much for her Antiquity, ſhould be over-fond of a new Point of Faith lately broach'd by a Famous *Act of an Infallible* Engliſh *Parliament*, conven'd at *Weſtminſter*, and guided by the Holy Spirit of *Shaftsbury*. But I doubt there are ſome *Parlaments* in the World, which will not eaſily admit this new *Article* into their *Creed*: Though the Church of *England* labours ſo much to maintain it, as a ſpecial Evidence of her ſingular *Loyalty*.

So that upon the whole matter the *Loyal Church* of *England* muſt either change her old Principles of *Loyalty*, and take example by her *Catholick* Neighbours how to behave her ſelf towards a Prince who is not of her Perſwaſion; or ſhe muſt blame none but her ſelf, if by her ill conduct hereafter, ſhe forfeits her Claim to that Royal Protection, which was promis'd upon the account of her conſtant Fidelity: For it it is an approv'd Axiom in *Phyloſophy*, *ceſſente cauſa tollitur effectus*; and we have a common ſaying of our own, *no longer Pipe, no longer Dance*. And now let us leave the *Holy Mother Church* at liberty, to conſult what new Meaſures of *Loyalty* ſhe ought to take for her own dear Intereſt, and for ought I know, it may be worth her ſerious conſideration.

F I N I S.

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